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FOSTERING AN ANIMAL MAKES YOU A HERO

Top 10 Reasons to Join the MCHS Foster Program

Rockville, Maryland – When you visit the Montgomery County Humane Society, do you wish you could take home all the animals you see?

There's a way you can come close – by becoming a foster caregiver. Fostering allows you to provide temporary care for a homeless animal before it gets adopted permanently. A typical experience often lasts only a few weeks at a time with any one animal, and MCHS asks fosters to participate for six months or longer.

Once your first foster animal goes home to its permanent home, you can take in another one and the momentum builds. Fosters often tell us about the good feelings they experience as they realize just how many animals they're able to help over time.

The need for foster homes is especially great right now. Every spring, animal shelters around the country are flooded with homeless kittens, puppies and other young animals. MCHS is no exception, with the number of animals swelling from early spring and continuing until early fall. Fosters help MCHS greatly increase the number of animals who find loving, permanent homes.

Here are the Top 10 Reasons to become part of the MCHS Foster Program:

10. You have time to make a commitment to one or more animals for a shorter period than the animal's entire lifetime.
9. You have lots of love and want to provide TLC for animals in general, or a particular breed.
8. You're motivated to help ease the burden on the shelter, which in turn allows caring for more animals and speeding up the adoption process.
7. The home environment you offer is much more likely to resemble life with a new permanent adopter, making it possible for the animal to adjust to a new permanent home that much faster.
6. With MCHS guidance, you can choose the type of animal you'd like to foster.
5. MCHS pays for basic shots, the foster animal's spay/neuter, and medical costs.

4. You'll extend your own network of friends among other fosters and adopters.
3. You get to help find the animal's new home through MCHS adoption events, profile and photos on the MCHS website.
2. You're giving many animals a second chance at life.

1. You're a rescuer! You're a hero to your foster animals, the families who adopt them, and your own friends and family.

Foster homes are needed for all types of animals, from dogs and cats to rabbits, guinea pigs, other small mammals, birds and reptiles. To give an animal a second chance in life by fostering, visit <http://www.mchumane.org/fosterprogram.shtml>, call 240-793-4201 or email fostermam@mchumane.org.

Sidebar:

Foster Volunteer Requirements/Commitments

In order to be approved as a foster home, you must meet the following requirements:

- Approval of landlord if you are renting
- Provide own transportation to the shelter and for veterinary appointments
- Have a flexible schedule
- Commit to at least six months in the program
- Complete a Foster Care Application and sign a foster care agreement
- Agree to a home visit/training interview by foster staff
- Ability to lift, push, carry 15-20 pounds
- Offer physical separation from your own animals as needed

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About the Montgomery County Humane Society:

The Montgomery County Humane Society in Rockville, MD, is a nonprofit animal welfare organization that has provided animal sheltering services for Montgomery County since 1958. MCHS receives funds to operate the Montgomery County Animal Shelter under a grant from the Montgomery County Government and from private donations. As the only full-service animal shelter in the county, MCHS handles more than 9,000 animals annually, and, as an open admission shelter, never turns an animal away. Visit www.mchumane.org to learn more, or call 240-773-5960 option 4. Hours to visit with the animals are weekdays, noon-7 p.m., and weekends, noon-5 p.m.; closed Wednesdays.